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MEMORIAL

CHARLES CARLETON
COFFIN

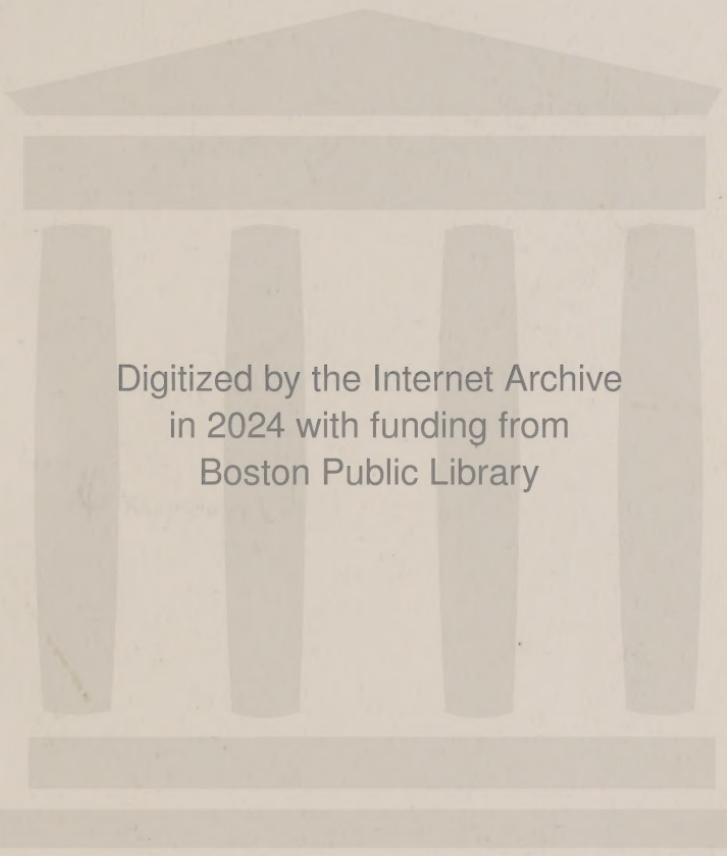
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Charles Carlton Coffin

IN MEMORIAM

CHARLES CARLETON COFFIN

2342,124

"THE world's Valhalla are the names of those
who have done great things for their fellow-men."

— CHARLES CARLETON COFFIN.

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FUNERAL SERVICES

AT

SHAWMUT CHURCH, BOSTON,

MARCH 5, 1896.

Prayer was offered by the Rev. Arthur Little, D.D., pastor of Second Church, Dorchester.

PRAYER.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, our hope is in Thee; Thou wast our fathers' God; Thou hast been the God of the children; Thou hast manifested Thyself unto us as a gracious and loving heavenly Father. Thou dost invite us to bring all our griefs and anxieties and burdens to Thee, assured that Thou art touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and that we may come boldly to the throne of grace in time of need.

We thank Thee that we can come here to this sacred place, hallowed by so many precious memories, where our brother and friend, Thy servant, has for so many years been in the habit of worshipping the triune God. We thank Thee that we are not as those whose sorrow is without hope. We bless Thy name for this life which, ended upon earth, has been begun in the world of life, and peace, and blessedness beyond. We bless Thee for all the service he has rendered to his day, his generation, his God, and his fellow-man. We thank Thee for this

life, so pure, so strong, so sweet. We bless Thee for all the help which has come through him to so many, many lives throughout this city, and this land, and the world. We thank Thee that he could say with one of old, “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.”

We have come here this morning that we may share in the coronation service. We pray for Thy blessing upon the friends so deeply touched by this sudden bereavement. We commend them to Thee. Bless this church, this city, and all whose hearts are touched and saddened by the removal from our midst of one who was so much to us in our lives, and so helpful in a thousand nameless ways. Give us in all the thoughts and words of this hour to realize more and more that Thou art a very present help in trouble, and that this life is but a preparation for a higher, larger, sweeter, and more perfect life. And so we rejoice that the earthly warfare is ended, and that our friend is now joining in the pæan of victory. We pray that we, also, may be prepared, through the grace of Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, to meet our loved one, and with him unite in singing the song of redeeming love unto Him who has bought us with His precious blood; and to His name shall be the praise and honor of our salvation, world without end. Amen.

Dr. Little, after a brief silence, said: —

There are few men, I think, engrossed in the affairs of life for an entire generation, to

whom the Word of God was so vital and so precious as to our friend Mr. Coffin. Let us open this Word and listen while God speaks to us in Ps. 23; Ps. 39: 4, 13; Ps. 46: 1, 5, 7.

I will read from Ezekiel 26: 1-5, which was a favorite word with Mr. Coffin, and the passage which he himself read, as he was journeying in the Eastern land, at the very spot concerning which the prophecy is uttered. Mr. Coffin was sitting there with his open Bible, and saw the literal fulfilment of this prophecy,—the fishermen spreading the nets in the very neighborhood where he was sitting.

The continued readings were from John 11: 21, 23; John 14: 19; 2 Cor. 5: 1, 8; Rev. 21: 1; Rev. 22: 5; 1 Cor. 15: 51, 57. The quartet sang “In My Father’s Arms Enfolded.” Dr. Barton then said:—

During the twenty-five years’ ministry of Dr. Webb as pastor of this church, Mr. Coffin was his constant friend and one of his ablest and foremost helpers. It is greatly to our regret, and also his, that Dr. Webb is ill to-day and unable to be here. His should be the first of human words that are spoken of our friend. He has sent the following letter to be read:—

My Dear Brother Barton:

I can hardly tell you how much I regret my inability to be with you to-day and mingle my tears with those who mourn the sudden departure of our dear brother “Carleton,” as we loved to call him. The conditions of my health constrain me to remain at home.

For many years we were associated together in the life and activities of Shawmut Church, and a truer, more considerate, responsive, and helpful parishioner no pastor could desire. He was a devout worshipper and a generous hearer. He was an interesting and magnetic

Bible-class teacher, and however hard at work, or weary, he was almost certain in his genial and deliberate way to be present at the weekly prayer-meeting. And almost without fail he had something to say—something that would command attention and awaken feeling ; some gleam of the supernatural would touch his spirit, and then, full of strong feeling and fervid emotion, he would rise and speak for five or eight minutes with wonderful effectiveness, introducing personal experience, observation, events of common life and of remote history, to enrich and illustrate his thought.

We travelled together for some months, — in Italy, visiting its wonderful cities, historic locations, palaces, galleries, and ruins; in Egypt, visiting the cities of the living and the dead, the tombs, temples, and pyramids; in Palestine, where we spent some twenty days in Jerusalem, until its principal streets were as familiar as the streets of Boston. We went down to Bethlehem, and gave ourselves up to the influence of scripture and tradition on the spot where the Babe was born. We went on to Hebron, where Abraham bought a piece of ground and buried the beautiful and loving wife; we returned by way of the Dead Sea, and, with our Bibles as the best of guide-books, reproduced to ourselves the days and the events of the past.

Together we visited the home of Mary and Martha, and the tomb from which the Life-Giver called forth Lazarus to a new and divine life. We stood in Gethsemane, by the old olive-trees, beneath the shadows of which the Saviour of men prayed, and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood. We climbed together to the top of the Mount of Olives, and looked up into the deep heavens to which He ascended, and abroad to the city over which He wept ; and both our words and our silence told how real it all was, and how the significance of it entered into our lives.

From the city we journeyed northward — up past Bethel, where Jacob saw a new vision and got a new heart, and on past the blue waters of Galilee, and across the great plain,—battle-ground of the ancient nations,—and over the Lebanons to Damascus and Baalbec, and then to the sea, and homeward thence ; and always and everywhere, scrutinizing the present, or reaching back into the past ; drinking from the sparkling waters of Abana and Pharpar, or searching for the wall over which Paul was let down in a basket ; impressed by the ruins of half-buried temples and cities, or looking forward, with sublime faith in

the prophecy and promise, to the time when all things shall be made new; — Carleton was always the same thoughtful, genial, courteous companion and sympathizing friend.

I honored, loved, and esteemed the man. His life is a beautiful example of devout, Christian steadfastness. The history of his small beginnings, gradual increase, and final success is one to inspire noble endeavor and ensure reward. He honored the church, and the church does well to honor him.

Affectionately yours,
E. B. WEBB.

Dr. Barton, after reading this letter, said: —

Of this "small" beginning, gradual increase, and final success to which Dr. Webb referred, there is none who can speak with greater knowledge or more appropriateness than he who in his early years was a pupil in Mr. Coffin's Sunday-school class in his native town of Boscawen, New Hampshire, and who throughout his life has known and honored the man whom we mourn to-day, — Dr. Arthur Little.

ADDRESS OF REV. ARTHUR LITTLE, D.D.

As a fellow-townsman of Mr. Coffin, for many years in the same church with him, a pupil, as has been suggested, in my boyhood, in his Sunday-school class, and he a frequent visitor and always a most welcome guest in my father's house, and as the devoted friend and inspiring companion of my whole life, I do feel it, dear friends, to be a great privilege to be here this morning, and bring some word, however imperfect it may be, of tribute and affection for one who has been so much to me and filled so large a place in my life. I begin to understand the meaning of the remark of the plain old man of Marshfield on the death of Webster: "The world seems lonesome without Mr. Webster." For the

first time in my life that sensation has come over me, since the death of Mr. Coffin,—the world seems to be lonesome without him.

In the preliminary chapter of the history of Boscawen, which he himself edited, he remarked that to be born in a town where great men had their nativity or had lived is, as it were, a patent of nobility; and I think we may be assured that Mr. Coffin got his patent of nobility from the town of his birth. It was the birthplace of John A. Dix, and of his brother, Major Dix, of William Pitt Fessenden, Nathaniel Greene and his son, Charles G. Greene, and Prof. Moses G. Farmer, the brother of Mrs. Coffin. It was the town in which Daniel and Ezekiel Webster prepared themselves for college, and where both of them for a time were engaged in the profession of the law, and where the latter, Ezekiel Webster, lived and died and now lies buried. It was a town whose early inhabitants came from Newburyport, and brought with them profound religious impressions, I doubt not in part received from the ministrations of George Whitfield during that remarkable evangelistic movement in progress at that time in Massachusetts. It was a town lying, at the time of its settlement, upon the very frontier of civilization, there not being a single village north of it to the Canada line; a town where for twenty years or more the log meeting-house was the only place of worship between Concord and Canada.

I judge that the very first thought to occur to these settlers — and it was the greatest and grandest — was the preaching of the gospel; and I do not doubt that the elevated and high character and stability of the town was owing to that fact, — to their devotion to religious principle. It was a town which, on the

morning after the news of the battle of Lexington, sent twenty men to the scene of conflict and had twenty men in the line of battle at Bunker Hill. It sent twenty-six men to the battle of Bennington to resist Burgoyne, and among them was Captain Coffin, the grandfather of our friend; a town which had been deeply stirred by patriotic impulses from the very hour of its earliest settlement, long before it became an organized township, as was shown by uniting in the defence of the Colonies against the French and Indians at Ticonderoga and Crown Point. It had its share also in the great conflict between Canada and the Provinces, at the time when the French lost their possession by the victory of General Wolfe.

I take it that these great names may have done very much to furnish Mr. Coffin's early ideas and to quicken the patriotism which was native to him. He has done very much to honor the town of his birth by giving time and labor to the preparation of its history. I should say that the three forces which helped to shape his character, from youth until his maturity and splendid manhood, were home, the church, and, in the providence of God, the battle-field. His father and mother, grandfather and grandmother, were devout Christians, and made sacrifices of which we can never know anything, in order that they might maintain the gospel. He seems to me to have shown, as far as I can learn about his youth and earlier years, a kind of restlessness and noble discontent which were the forecast of the larger and greater manhood which he at length reached. He exhibited some tastes and developed some thoughts that other boys of his years did not seem to exhibit,—one, I think, a fondness

for the use of his pen, which he used with great facility, and another, a taste for music, of which he was passionately fond, as you know. I think that for many years, if my memory does not fail me, he played the musical instrument of the old meeting-house, which was very dear to him. It was in part his contribution, during the early years, to the services there, and, I think, one of the pleasantest memories of after-years.

When he came to raise the question of his future career, I doubt if he was sure what he should do or where he should be, but he was very sure that he should not be a farmer in the town of Boscowen. That much was clear. He chafed under those narrow limitations. It may be that when he came to Boston he was not quite clear what his future vocation should be, but he was very sure what it would not be. He was following, rather, the leading of Providence, in whom he had been trained from boyhood to have such implicit trust.

At eleven years of age he entered the church. Think of it! Sixty-three years devoted to the service of his Lord and Master! He seems to me to be an illustration of a man who, when he is equal to it, finds a hard physical environment, united with a wholesome moral and spiritual environment, of supreme advantage. To a weak nature it would very likely mean only failure, but to a man of the heroic mould of Mr. Coffin it meant opportunity, and it only nerved him to more strenuous effort; and it was everything to him that the atmosphere in the home, the community, and the church was what it was,—so warm, so Christian, so spiritual, so sympathetic, and so suited to furnish just the

right conditions for the moulding of his very responsive and susceptible nature.

And then he possessed what I think might very well be called the spirit of aggressiveness, or, possibly better, the spirit of sanctified self-assertion. He never thought of self-assertion for his own sake, or for the sake of honor or promotion, but he had in him a kind of push and an earnestness of purpose—you might almost say audacity—that somehow stirred him and prompted him always to be in the place of greatest advantage at a given time for the service of others. He seemed always to be just at the point of supreme advantage in a crisis, just where he could give the world, at the right time and in the best way, the fullest report of a battle, or a conference, or any other matters of supreme moment. This was characteristic of him. It appeared all through his New Hampshire life, and was indeed in part a native endowment.

In thinking of him, I have come almost to believe that the finest and rarest trait of all was that love which filled his heart, to the last day and hour, for the old home, the old birthplace, and his early companions and friends. It was given to Mr. Coffin to have acquaintance with more distinguished men in our own and other countries than comes to very many in a generation; he had known most of the great men in civil and military life—many of the distinguished men in parts of Europe and England. He had, of course, a very wide circle of friends and acquaintances in Boston, but let me say to you, dear friends, that notwithstanding this wide acquaintance with men of high distinction, he never failed to recognize and honor the humblest of his townsmen. He was loved and honored by them all. Was there a marriage to be celebrated, a min-

ister to be installed, an anniversary of any kind, they turned to Mr. Coffin to be present and participate. And it has fallen to me, in the last six or eight years, to be there on occasions of this kind with him, and to see the warmth of affection poured out upon him, and the beautiful spirit in which it was always reciprocated by him. His home, his heart, all he had, were open to the service of the humblest of his early playmates or companions, so far as they survived. It was a beautiful trait in his character; and it goes to show that he was preeminently a man of the people, born from the people; he championed them, spoke for them, had a heart afame with love for suffering humanity. This appeared in the anti-slavery agitation. How could he help being active in this cause and that of temperance? His father, when many of his dearest friends in the church were opposed or indifferent to these great reforms, was an emancipationist and an ardent friend of temperance. His father was the first man in Boscawen to cut down such trees as bore fruit only fit to be made into cider. These splendid traits you find so dominant in after-years can be traced back to the early home and church.

I am glad to be able to stand here to-day and say these things. To quote his own words: "Men may die, generations come and go, but teaching, example, and principles live forever." He has gone, so far as his presence amongst us is concerned; we shall look upon his beautiful face no more, but his teaching and example will live forever.

I cannot refrain from speaking just one word more. On one occasion while I was at Dartmouth College, he was there. Among the visitors was a distinguished man, a Con-

gressman, from the West. Mr. Coffin called at once at the room of this prominent man, taking me along with him. The moment we entered, the distinguished man said, "What will you take?" Mr. Coffin quietly, but firmly, said, "Mr. —, I never drink; I never did." It impressed me as characteristic of the man.

"Were a star quenched on high,
For ages would its light,
Still travelling downward from the sky,
Shine on our mortal sight.
So when a great man dies,
For years beyond our ken,
The light he leaves behind him
Shines on the paths of men."

Dr. Barton then said: —

Reference has already been made to Mr. Coffin's love of music. He early began to play the organ, or such instrument as they had in the church which he then attended. This organ he loved, and often at the close of the service he would seat himself at its keyboard and play, and the hours went by and he was still seated there. He composed not a few pieces of music himself. Two years ago last Easter, for the celebration in this church, he wrote a piece of music to accompany the words of the hymn, "Jesus Reigns," and that music will now be sung by the quartet,—the music which Mr. Coffin wrote and played.

After the hymn, he continued: —

Of Mr. Coffin's work as a historian, and especially of his view of history as manifesting divine providence, no one might more fitly speak than he who so well and intimately knew him,—himself a historian,—Dr. Griffis, his former pastor.

ADDRESS OF REV. WM. E. GRIFFIS, D.D.

I had the inspiration, dear friends, of knowing our brother only in his mature life, when his convictions had become sure, when his philosophy of life had been formed, when his faith in God had settled upon firmest foundations, and when the mainsprings of all his life had had their due exercise upon the battle-field and in travel abroad, and when he had entered into that rich inheritance of the years which brings the philosophic mind.

Those who knew anything of him in his private life know that he was a man of profound sympathies; of faith, that wonderful faith which made you believe in God. His face was one remarkably expressive of sympathy. There are few faces which God has made out of the common earth of the ground, refined through the crucible of experience and suffering, and transfigured with the light which is from above, that could so illuminate, inform, and inspire others.

My friends here will allow me to say that while as a preacher of the gospel and a pastor, as one who had to come before the same audience three times a week with the same story,—while I can appreciate and could appreciate the presence of others,—I always felt that in Mr. Coffin's presence I had an audience; whether he sat over there in the gallery, or right down there in his usual seat, or down in the front seat in the prayer-meeting (oh, what a blessed thing it is for the Christian to sit up front, near his minister!), I always felt that in Mr. Coffin I had an audience. He had a face that looked at me, a smile with a touch of the divine genius, and showed sympathy at every turn. Even when the thought was such as he could not agree

with fully, there was yet the sympathy of the broad-hearted, whole-souled man.

No doubt to many minds Mr. Coffin seemed the very type of the New England man. Let me open my own heart and say that to me he seemed the very type of the Middle States man, standing between the extreme forces of the life and opinions of the South and the intense, intellectual, and sometimes narrow life of the East and North. He had not only that intellectual flavor and temper about him which comes from New England, from that region which has always been the brain of the nation, but he had also some of that constructive power, that large sympathy, that way of looking at both sides of a question, which appeals to the best men who were born and lived their lives under the inspiration of extreme forces, the great constructive and solidifying forces of the nation. He seemed to me a man who had all that is best of our great and mighty nation ingrowing.

He was not a literary genius. I should never rank Mr. Coffin with the men of genius. And nobody knew his limitations better than he himself. He was not a man who, before writing a book, would go back to the extreme sources so as to take a second-hand opinion from anybody, as some men have believed and thought. Mr. Coffin's genius lay in practical thought. He never dissociated the truth from the man who lived it; and therein God gave him always a constant inspiration.

He cared very little for truths which had been shapen in symbols which had outlived their time. He hammered on the anvil of its age and epoch. He never cared for the truth taken out of old things. He always loved the truth exemplified in man, and always spoke the truth so illuminated that he linked the

truth to the man, and loved to show you that the great thought-discoveries and feelings that lifted the race were engrafted and so joined with human life that you could not separate them. He loved to talk of the prophecies, as bound up with the life of the prophet ; of the truth in Jesus Christ, as linked with and illuminated by Him ; of the great truths of the apostles, as joined with their travail and suffering.

Hence, there was no man I ever knew who had so clear an idea of human history as the result of the travail of the souls of men. Did he write a book ? That book came out of his blood, out of his heart. There was never a man who more truly illustrated what Milton said of a book,—“ It was the life-blood of a noble spirit.”

He sympathized with the poor man in his struggle against what seemed to be the adverse destiny of life ; nobody ever felt more with the soldiers — God bless them ! they honor and revere his memory for good cause. He could even sympathize with the poor “ Crackers ” of the South, impressed into the evil service of trying to destroy the American cause ; and he never took up a book but he thought of the travail and toil of brain that went into the making of the book. He worshipped inside this dwelling of God, and appreciated all the thought and study that went into the making of this church ; there was not anything about it that was born out of the pain and thought and previous toil and preparation of the architect and the men who gave that we might erect this beautiful edifice [not another in the United States has such an auditorium for speaking] but Mr. Coffin thought of the toil and sacrifice that went into it.

His books are the easiest to read, because
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he put so much mental toil into the books. It is a compliment to the man whose outward temple lies there in the dust, to say that I have gone to the public libraries and seen his books bound and rebound three, four, and five times, until in every way they had to be replenished and made anew. To a man who writes a book there can be no greater compliment. They put a finer fibre into the life and substance of men, and to-day we have a new generation of boys trained on Mr. Coffin's trumpet-calls for duty and sacrifice, so that I doubt not, if the call comes, we shall have just as much sacrifice and readiness to die, if need be, as in the days of their fathers, as in the days when the young men sprang forward at the clarion call to the battle-field, nerved to new life and new sacrifice.

And hence Mr. Coffin, of all the men I ever had the honor of knowing, had the philosophy of history. Mr. Coffin was born in a noble State that is not noble in its exterior riches. It was never rich in soil, in material or external products; but oh, how grand is its name, and how bright are its riches in the men that it has brought forth! Mr. Coffin knew what cold winters and hard work were from a boy, and hence he knew the pain and strength that went into the making of a flint arrow-head; he knew the strength that goes into the making of a musket, a rifle, a house, a government; and he appreciated that toil. He went into the great struggle of war; he went over the world and saw different civilizations, and temples, and idols, and governments, and societies, and at last he came to have an illuminated insight into history such as few men have. He believed that God almighty made the sun and stars and moon, but he did not believe that when it came to thought

and philosophies and religions, God was absent. No; he knew that God made these things, too, and he got at the various men and races and civilizations — went away off into the infinite, away off to the unrecorded, prehistoric man ; he could see and had sympathy even with the red man and the white man, with the strong and weak of earth ; he could feel a sympathy with the slave.

He had the genius of character. I think he had nothing in his outward form which was attractive, except a dignity and a majestic appearance to remind one of Washington — he always reminded me of him ; to me his whole life is joined with that of the Father of his Country. He was not a literary or military genius ; he was not a genius of jurisprudence, except in common sense and character ; but he had a grand organization of body, soul, and spirit, that moved in harmony with the soul that was in him, — in harmony with the will of God.

I was asked yesterday to say in what one word I would sum up his life, and I said, “Character.” Thank God, the heaven is open and clear, and we see going in, east and north, south and west, those who love God and struggle after Him, to sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the fathers ; but we, to-day, rejoice that there is left upon us the inspiration of a great character. And so, largely filled with sympathy for the bereaved widow in our midst to-day, above all we have a feeling of joy that God was able to take out of the dust of the earth the humblest materials, organize it into noble form, put therein a grand spirit, a glorious character, and give him a faith that made you believe in God, to whom be all glory.

ADDRESS OF REV. WM. E. BARTON, D.D.

Grief is no unusual thing. There is no heart here that has not known it. There is scarce a home where death has not entered. We weep the more sincerely with those that weep, because the intervals are not long between our own sorrows. The whole Commonwealth mourns to-day our chief magistrate. God comfort his family! God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts! God bless him in whose elevation to the Governor's chair Providence has anticipated the will of the people!

A very tender sorrow brings us here to-day, and we turn for comfort to the Word of God.

TEXT: With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation. — Ps. 91:16.

It is not because of his unusual age that this text seems to me appropriate for the funeral of our friend. His years were but little more than threescore and ten, and his step was light and his heart was young, and we hardly thought of him as an old man. Nor is it because his work seemed to us completed that we think of the measure of his days as satisfied. His facile pen dropped upon a new page; and before him, as he ceased to labor, were tasks midway and others just begun. It is because our first feeling is so unsatisfied, it is because there was so much more which he wished and we wished him to do, that we are constrained to measure the length of his life, and to find, if we may find, in spite of this sudden break in our hopes and his plans, a completion that can satisfy. Measured by its experiences and accomplishments, it may seem to us that this life so abruptly terminated was one whose length

and symmetry well deserve to be considered a fulfilment of the promise of the text.

In the first place, Mr. Coffin's life may be counted a long one when it is remembered how few of those whose deeds he chronicled or shared when in his prime remain to mourn his loss to-day. Few men have had so wide an acquaintance. Few lives have touched at so many points the lives of so many noted men. How few of all the generals whose battles he described to eager but distant eyes remain to this present! Grant, who wrote "Unconditional Surrender" on the muzzles of his guns, has surrendered to the grim, unconquerable enemy; Sherman, who marched to the sea with terror in his front and ashes in his rear, has headed a sorrowing procession to his last resting-place, beside the great Father of Waters; Sheridan, who rode on his coal-black steed to save the day at Winchester, rode silently beyond our sight with the dread rider upon the pale horse; McClellan and Burnside and Thomas, Meade and Hooker and Butler and Banks, and all that splendid galaxy of names whose deeds he witnessed and recorded, have fought their last battle and laid down their arms. Farragut and Foote and Porter, whose gunboats' prows cut the Confederacy in twain along the Mississippi's length, now sail the river whose waters dark and cold waft to us no echo of their voices. Of names he knew and honored among statesmen, the same is true. Webster and Everett and Sumner, Seward and Chase and Andrew, Blaine and Garfield and Colfax,—all are gone. Of his companions in literature, also,—Bancroft and Lossing and Motley, Prescott and Emerson and Alcott and Hawthorne, Longfellow and Lowell and Holmes and Whittier,—all have preceded him to the

other world. Of those who fought with him the great battle for freedom,—Garrison and Phillips and Brownlow,—these and a thousand others now enjoy the freedom of God's heaven. Of the Presidents whose administrations he has witnessed, only two now live; and both of those whose lives he wrote died at the hands of assassins. When we count the dead who were his friends, and mark the vacant places made by the removal of his companions of other days, our only wonder is that he should have outlived so many of his contemporaries. We wonder that it so seldom occurred to us, when we met him, that he was really an old man.

Measured by his experiences, his life was even longer. He constructed the first fire-alarm, and himself gave the first alarm ever sounded with electric apparatus. He lived to see every great city in the land with fire-engines ready to start, night or day, to save life and property at the pressing of a button. He saw almost the beginning of telegraphic communication, and his telegraphic descriptions of battles were almost epoch-making in the journalism of his day. He lived to see the land strung with electric wires and the ocean-bed a network of submarine cables. He was born when oceans and continents were almost insuperable barriers between nations. He lived to travel around the world. He was born when the temperance movement was in its infancy. He lived to see the liquor traffic dishonored. He was born when the nation had but six States which, according to the last preceding census, held no slaves. He lived until from the pines of Michigan to the palmettos of Mississippi, from the break of the Atlantic on Cape Cod to the murmur of the Pacific at the Golden Gate, no man

could claim as his own a fellow human being. He was born when the nation was a meagre strip along the coast of the Atlantic and the Gulf, with settlements to the westward less than a generation old, and the Mississippi regarded by sane people as the limit of emigration. He wrote in 1858, and published at his own expense (and the fifty dollars it cost him was a fortune to him then), a pamphlet setting forth the possibility of a railroad to the Pacific, and pointing out the reasons why such a road should connect the western end of Lake Superior with Puget Sound. Even far-sighted men called it visionary, but he lived to see the Northern Pacific Railroad accomplished, and the whole continent bound together, east and west, with bands of steel, on which trains that have grown to be hardly less than cities in motion rush to and fro at a breathless speed. No part of this progress has been inactively witnessed by him. In every part of it, by voice and pen, with heart and brain, he has labored for the better things which he always believed possible. If life be measured by such things, then with a life that was wonderfully long did God satisfy him.

But life has other relations by which it may be measured. To Mr. Coffin his church relations were among the dearest of life. In a letter written less than a week before his death he said that next to the ties of blood he held those dear which bound him to his brothers and sisters in the church. In this church, for more than a third of a century, he labored with success and honor. Those came to feel that they knew him best who knew him there. In his large Bible class, uniting the results of recent scholarship with a simple faith (and neither to him nor to those who knew him did his fearless use of his

reason and his sublime faith in God seem inconsistent), he inspired and encouraged and instructed the many who hung upon his words. In the prayer meeting he often rose and, with words as tender as they were wise, spoke out of a full heart and a wealth of experience of the blessedness of the Christian life.

When this church changed its form of work to adapt itself to a changed environment, the task before it at first seemed to Mr. Coffin an impossible one. Even to his large heart and vision the result seemed rather worse than problematical. He even had serious thoughts of withdrawing from active work, and from the church itself, rather than wait for the failure that seemed imminent. It was after he had announced his purpose, so far as it had become a purpose, to the pastor, then newly called, that the pastor addressed to him a letter, supplemented by an interview, in which he appealed to Mr. Coffin to stand by the work. Nobly did he respond, not with perfunctory service, but with his whole heart's endeavor, his faith growing with his effort; and the new pastor soon came to count him one of his most cherished and helpful friends, as he had ever been a true friend to the work of the church. Of my personal loss in the death of Mr. Coffin I may not say all that is in my heart, but outside his own home none can feel it more. If others speak to-day from a longer acquaintance, none can speak with truer love or from a deeper sense of loss.

This church, which Mr. Coffin loved, and in which he had labored for more than a quarter of a century, celebrated, only a few weeks ago, its semi-centennial. Mr. Coffin was the historian on that occasion, and the anniversary which seemed to us then the portal of a new epoch in his work for the church

now seems to us its fitting culmination. Many who were present at the Friday night meeting of that anniversary week will remember how one after another of members past and present rose and spoke of themselves as belonging to the past of the church or to its present. Toward the close of the meeting Mr. Coffin rose, and with radiant face and uplifted vision exclaimed, "I belong to the future!" Then followed his earnest testimony and his cordial, uplifting, hopeful anticipation, wherein the church militant became in his vision the church triumphant.

Mr. Coffin had but lately moved into the new home which he had built, and no young couple anticipated with more pleasure their honeymoon than this groom and bride of fifty years, who looked forward to the new house wherein to celebrate their golden wedding and live the remaining years which seemed stretching out before them. It is scarce a fortnight since we gathered there, and wished them joy in the second half-century of wedded life upon whose threshold they were standing. Perhaps if we knew all we should see how this event, which seems the catastrophe, is really the fruition of all those good wishes on our part and plans on theirs.

In his book entitled "The Seat of Empire," published in 1870, Mr. Coffin, who even in such a book could not write without a purpose, and that a moral one, urged emigrants going to the West to go in groups and take with them "the moral atmosphere of their old homes." He advocated the opening of a school the first week, and a Sunday school the first Sunday after the arrival of such a colony at its destination. And even that bare new home, cramped and poor, he suggested might be to them the type of a better one in more prosper-

ous years, and of the home beyond, so that, he said, from the beginning, “on Sabbath morning, swelling upward on the summer air, sweeter than the lay of lark among the flowers, will ascend the songs of the Sunday school established in their new home. Looking forward with ardent hope to prosperous years, they will look still beyond the earthly to the heavenly, and sing

‘ My heavenly home is bright and fair;
Nor pain nor death can enter there; ’ ”

Was it not a strange thought to find in a book on immigration and the resources of the far West? And is there not in it the suggestion of a prophecy? The moving into this new home amid such pleasant surroundings and favorable auspices — must it not have seemed to him all that in his thought even the settler’s cabin might suggest to one who had found here no continuing city? May we not be mistaken if we think of the labor and love and thought which the new home required as in any way in vain, if the home proved, as it did, but the portal to the home above? I apprehend that if we knew his thought now we might find this among the things that seemed to him the fitting culmination of a long and satisfying life. Two other such occasions as these two semi-centennials he could not enjoy on earth. We are celebrating to-day the only better thing which God could do for him.

So, measured in these ways, this life so suddenly cut off appears well rounded and complete. There remains but one thing, and that is not lacking, for the complete satisfaction of a reverent, godly soul; for three-score and ten years are still short to a soul in which God has put capacity for eternal growth. “With long life will I satisfy him.”

How long must life be to satisfy such a soul ? For his brain was still active, and his heart still beat with sympathy for every good cause, and his capacity for good work, here or in God's great Somewhere, had but increased with the passing of the years. Eternal life alone can satisfy an immortal soul. " I shall be satisfied when I awake with his likeness."

This long life satisfies our sense of right and the fitness of things, because it has not ended. He who sat in his seat and worshipped with us here last Sunday is not lost to those interests which he held dear in life, and his hope in life is ours for him in death.

We need continually to revise our thought of the end of things. Once when we knew a very little less than the little we still know, we saw fire burn the wood, and we said, " Combustion is the end of matter ; " but a man a little wiser than we said to us, " No ; it but changes its form. Combustion is powerless to destroy. We have found no means of destroying an atom. All matter that ever has been abides." Then we saw the lightning rend the oak, or fly through space and lose itself in the void, and we said, " Thus force ends,—expends itself, and dies." And then another man a little, and only a little, wiser said to us, " There is no loss of force. So far as we can see, there never has been nor will be. All force abides. All that was in

" the snowfall in the river,
A moment white, then melts forever,
Or in the borealis race
That flit ere you can point the place,
Or in the rainbow's lovely form
Evانishing amid the storm,'—

all this abides, and all else, in undiminished power. There is no death of matter. There is no grave of energy."

O foolish, and slow of heart to believe !
Are we not ready for the next lesson ? Our
brother falls, and we stand beside his grave ;
and we say, as the dust returns to its kindred
dust, " It is the end." Then there stands One
beside us and points with a pierced hand to a
stone rolled away and a broken seal, and
says, " Do matter and force abide ? and does
mind alone perish ? Is God parsimonious
with his cheapest and wasteful of his dearest
products ? Matter God holds cheap, and
worlds are but as dust in the balance, but
character costs centuries of patient effort,
God's best effort, Gethsemanes of divine sor-
row, Calvaries of redemptive struggle, and
will He waste it ? In life doth not the fittest
survive ? and in death shall the fittest alone
of all things perish ? I am the resurrection
and the life. He that believeth on me, though
he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever
liveth and believeth on me shall never die.
Believest thou this ? " And though the tears
blind us that we cannot see His form, we
hear His voice and believe, and death has lost
its sting.

He whose body lies here, but who is him-
self not in the coffin, lived and died in this
faith. It was because he so profoundly be-
lieved the words that he wrote to them the
music which has been sung to-day :—

" Jesus lives; no longer now
Can thy terrors, Death, appall us.
Jesus lives; by this we know
Thou, O Grave, canst not enthrall us.
Hallelujah!"

I have reserved to another occasion, and
to-day have left to others, reference to Mr.
Coffin's work as a statesman and an author,
speaking to-day only of him as a man and of
the completion of his life in the life which he

now enjoys. By his character, even more than by his books, he, being dead, yet speaketh.

In closing, I cannot forbear to quote, as expressing our thought of Mr. Coffin, from a letter to me in response to a letter of sympathy after the death of Mrs. Coffin's brother, Professor Farmer. No fitter or more beautiful words could be chosen, and none could more fully express our thought of him on this occasion than these words spoken by him of another : —

“ We have not a tear to shed. Our music is not a dirge, but a jubilate. We shall deeply feel his departure in the sense of missing his ever kindly smile, his radiant face and pleasant voice, his high thought and spiritual uplift. But we shall ever think of him as beholding the face of God.”

PRAYER.

O Thou Lord of the unnumbered years, behind whom is the landscape of the eternal plain and before whom is the sunshine of the endless morning, we enter into Thy courts with thanksgiving and into Thy gates with joy on this mid-week day, which we make a Sabbath of joy and rejoicing, thanking Thee for the life that now is and which is to be, and believing that it is good to leave our business and toil and come to the house where prayer is wont to be made and prove that it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting, for here the living will lay it to heart. And God grant that this day we may receive a fresh inspiration for life's duty and battle. We thank Thee that it has been given us to celebrate this birthday ended, and for the long life with one who has helped to make him what he has been and given him to sit down to the marriage supper. We thank

Thee for him who has helped us to live more earnest lives, to believe more in God, to live more in the sunshine of faith. Lay Thy sweet benediction upon her who under Thy good providence has done so much through an unselfish love and affection, tender care and sweet companionship, to make him what he has been to the world and to his dear friends,—this dear and loving people whose tenderness and love he has proven and we have proven. God above, give them Thy blessing as we go away. This has been a rich hour; help them that are in the life yet remaining, and keep us in the sunshine and faith of our loving brother. And like our friend, never dismayed, may we never be dismayed until we at last, going from strength to strength, shall appear in Zion, to go no more out forever; and to us shall come, from the east and north and south and west, those who have come at last to know the truth, to sit down among the company of the redeemed, and unto Thee, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, give praise everlasting. Amen.

Following the prayer Dr. Barton said:—

It was the purpose of our organist, Mr. Dunham, a true and honored friend of Mr. Coffin, to play as the postlude to this service the stateliest of funeral marches, but I dissuaded him. This is a Christian funeral. Our music is not a dirge, but a jubilate. The hope of our friend in life is ours for him in death. Instead of even the noblest funeral march expressing our own grief, there will be played the most triumphant of anthems, expressing his own victory over death,—Handel's matchless "Hallelujah Chorus."

The organ then played the "Hallelujah Chorus," and the benediction was pronounced by Dr. Barton.

TRIBUTES OF FRIENDS

[From "The Congregationalist"]

CHARLES CARLETON COFFIN.*

Good man, farewell! Thy rugged youth was pure!
Based on the rock, thy lifework shall endure!
Quick at thy country's call, in council tried,
Thou hast been always found on Virtue's side!

Good man, farewell! Life hath attained its goal.
We who have lost thee would not draw thy soul
Back to our homes, from out thy home in Heaven —
At last thy rest and meed of joy are given.

Good man, farewell! The memory of thy worth
And gracious deeds abides upon the earth.
What seest thou now? Oh, surely thou wouldest tell
If thou couldst only speak — Good man, farewell!

C. H. R.

When a life as strong and pure and useful
as that of Charles Carleton Coffin passes from
earth to Heaven we owe it to ourselves, as
well as to him who has gone, to pause long
enough to estimate the character at its true

* Charles Carleton Coffin was born July 26, 1823, at Boscowen, N. H. His earlier years were spent at home on the farm, his education being confined to the district school and several terms at local academies. Farming and civil engineering claimed him in turn, and it was not until he settled in Boston in 1854 that he found his life-work. Connected successively with several daily papers, he went to the front as correspondent of the *Journal* at the beginning of the war, and gained a wide and honorable reputation through his letters. A trip around the world, many years of literary labor, and lecture and platform work sum up the chief activities of his maturer life. He published no less than twenty volumes, besides a multitude of pamphlets and newspaper articles, and delivered as many as two thousand addresses. He died suddenly, at his new home in Brookline, March 2, leaving a wife, the sister of the inventor Prof. Moses G. Farmer.

worth. With the swift passage of time, with present scenes and interests thrusting themselves upon our attention, the outlines of well-known figures grow dim all too soon. The ranks of workers in the forefront of which they stood and battled for the right close up, and save to the near circle of friends and kindred the loved and honored character becomes a memory only. There is all the more reason, then, why while the shadow cast by the death of Mr. Coffin is still on many hearts we should find what comfort and stimulus we may by asking what were the sources of his greatness and goodness and what lessons may be learned from his long and honorable career.

His is one of those rare lives which, touched at almost any period of its history, interests and attracts the student of men. Edwin D. Mead comprehended it well when he said, "It was a full, rich, fruitful, overflowing life, with every talent put to service." It might, perhaps, admit of being divided into three periods,—that of his boyhood and youth in a typical New Hampshire rural community, that of his participation in the war and of his travel round the globe, and that which followed his return to this country and extended to his death—the years when he wrote most of his books, delivered lectures and historical addresses, and served the church and state, not only as an official representative of the people, but in countless unremunerated and often unrecognized ways.

Yet it is hard to bound off one section of his years from another and differentiate them save as respects what may be called the surroundings and accessories of his life. From boyhood to old age moved continuously and with cumulative force the stream of his purpose. When the boy of sixteen gathered about

him the awkward, homespun lads of his native town and formed them into a military company, which was so well drilled as to excite the admiration of their elders, young Coffin was but expressing, with the material at hand, the military ardor which twenty years later made him one of the first to spring to the defence of his country. When, a young man engaged in arduous outdoor work from four o'clock in the morning until long after sunset, he reserved the later evening hours for study and reading, he was exercising the talent for patient research which has given his historical writings such an honorable place in literature. When, in the church of his boyhood, he took the lead in a movement to secure an organ, he was evincing an appreciation of music which years afterwards took form in melodious hymns and tunes. Even the hard manual labor by which he sought to wrest an honest living from the rocky soil of the Granite State was, in the providence of God, a preparation for the rough and tumble of camp life, for the strenuous days and sleepless nights that only a war correspondent knows.

Thus it was that each stage of his career was dovetailed into the next. One cannot speak of a period of preparation and acquisition, for all his life long he was preparing for something better and nobler; he was acquiring, bit by bit, information that should serve him well in future emergencies.

One is impressed, too, by the variety and richness of the scenes in which Mr. Coffin figured either as a spectator or as a participant. Little did the boy growing up amid the privations of a New Hampshire home, attending school and church as did his mates, sharing in the simple and wholesome pleasures of rural life, dream that one day he would be privileged

to look upon kings and potentates. Little would a stranger approaching him in his later years realize that this modest, self-contained man had passed through so many martial and memorable experiences. Few men in this century have witnessed more of the occasions that shine out as the conspicuous events of the hundred years now drawing to their close. The opening of the Ohio & Mississippi Railway, the festivities in Canada and in this country incidental to the visit of the Prince of Wales, the Republican convention in Chicago which nominated Lincoln, thirty great battles of the Civil War, the entrance at its close into Richmond, the night in the House of Commons when Disraeli brought in the Reform Bill, the Paris Exhibition of 1867, the great banquet in London given to Charles Dickens, the review of the Prussian army at Berlin before William I., the Czar of Russia, and Bismarck, the coronation of the Emperor and Empress of Austria as King and Queen of Hungary, the entrance of Victor Emmanuel into Venice—these were some of the great occasions of the century which he beheld. He might certainly apply to himself the lines of the Roman poet :—

“ All of which I saw, and a part of which I was.”

It was this gift of vision which made Mr. Coffin the prince of letter-writers and the author of historical works which will never lose their popularity. There are city libraries in this country which keep in constant circulation as many as a dozen copies of “The Boys of ’76.” Mr. Coffin never had to manufacture his material, to “pad” what the newspapermen call his “story;” but, seeing the scene in its proportions and detail, and master of a clear, straightforward style, he reproduced

what he saw in lines and colors that will make his pictures endure. Much has been written since his letters describing his journey around the world appeared, but they leave little to be desired by the reader to-day in their combination of information with picturesque and racy description of character and customs.

It is no wonder that childhood feels under special obligation to the man who has made the days of '76 and of the early sixties live again; and it reveals the hold he had on little hearts that the children in one of the Brookline schools asked to have the flag on their edifice put at half-mast on the day of his funeral, and that his picture in their schoolroom might be wreathed with laurel.

But if Mr. Coffin's sight had comprehended only that which appeals to the eye, he would never have been the power he was. He could see principles as clearly and definitely as he saw battle-fields and the glories of foreign cities. Nay, more; he could make others see those principles, as cogently and persistently he unfolded to duller minds the basal ethical truths which should govern public and private action.

See him in the Massachusetts House of Representatives in the winter of 1885, leading the forces that were striving to secure a better police system for the city of Boston. Outvoted at the start in the committee of which he was chairman, he made his fight in the open House, appealing to the moral sense of the State to sustain him. His battle against the combined resistance of an unscrupulous lobby, a powerful liquor interest, and a set of self-seeking politicians, and his final triumph after days of the most stubborn fighting, will go down into history as one of the most noteworthy struggles ever waged in the Massa-

chusetts Legislature. Only the consciousness that he was right could have nerved and sustained him in the great contest, and only the ability to communicate his own sense of right to others could have gained for him the allies without whom the fight would have been a hopeless one.

Two traits rise conspicuously above many other commendable ones in Mr. Coffin's character. The first was its symmetry. Earnest believer though he was, splendid fighter though he could be, he was far from being an extremist. He recognized the limitations which must arise from association with others. He would take half a loaf in temperance and Sunday legislation when he could not get the whole loaf. He would adjust himself to the existing degree of public sentiment and from that as a basis work for concrete results. This toleration and consideration for others characterized his religious feeling. He knew history too well, he had too profound a philosophy of life and too large a conception of the character of God, to care anything for the *minutiae* of theological debate. Without knowing it, perhaps, Mr. Coffin was a reconciler and a mediator in this time of transition. Dr. Griffis was right in saying at his funeral that in this particular he was a Middle States man rather than a representative of the sternest and most uncompromising type of New England belief. It was this ability to see both sides of a question that enabled him to help many out of their intellectual darkness into the liberty of the sons of God. Because he had "fought his doubts and gathered strength," he could help other doubters.

The other beautiful and commanding quality was his disinterestedness. His honest hands grasped, during his threescore years and

ten, various and honorable implements of toil, but they never carried about an axe of his own to be ground at somebody else's expense. How many citizens among Boston's five hundred and seventy-five thousand can take rank with him in the interest which, to the very hour of his death, he maintained in everything that might affect the welfare of the community?

He held office for only a small fraction of the time that he has been in the truest sense the servant of the people. No respectable reform appealed in vain for his sympathy. And it was in line with all his public work that only the week before his death, when a distressing condition of affairs in one of the public institutions hereabouts was brought to his attention, his eye kindled and he said, "Oh, I wish I had time to try to help to make matters right!" He wrote many books, from which he derived a moderate pecuniary gain, but no one will ever reckon up the number of public addresses and newspaper articles for which he received no financial reward. No one will ever compute the hours he has given to committee work and to untiring effort in behalf of good causes. So it was no perfunctory impulse that led Acting Governor Wolcott to say that Charles Carleton Coffin's death robs the Commonwealth of one of her best citizens.

We should miss the best lesson if we did not record the part his religion had in making him the man he was. The first hymn he ever learned began,

"Life is the time to serve the Lord."

And it was that passionate sense of obligation to his Master and his Redeemer which made him from his boyhood covet earnestly the

best gifts, that thereby he might prove his devotion by service and by sacrifice.

The night before he died he talked in a familiar way at the supper-table about the magnetic power of the cross of Christ, and said that to him its great attractiveness was that it represented service. In the twinkling of an eye he has passed from an abundant and untiring earthly service of his Master into that sphere where His servants still serve Him, but in the gladness and strength of the open vision, and with His name written upon their foreheads.

HOWARD A. BRIDGMAN.

PERSONAL LETTERS

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,
COUNCIL CHAMBER.

BOSTON, March 3, 1896.

MRS. CHARLES CARLETON COFFIN,
Brookline, Mass.,

Dear Madam : — I was greatly shocked and grieved to hear of the sudden death of your honored husband ; I had so recently seen him vigorous and happy, and receiving the congratulations of his many warm friends.

In common with all who knew him, I had entertained for him a feeling of high respect and esteem.

His life has been honorable, loyal, and useful, and his death robs the Commonwealth of one of her best citizens.

With heartfelt sympathy in your great affliction, believe me, madam,

Respectfully and truly yours,

ROGER WOLCOTT.

MELROSE, MASS.,
March 9, 1896.

MY DEAR MRS. COFFIN : —

I am not yet able to feel that Mr. Coffin has left us forever, and that you are left behind in your beautiful home, sad and desolate. I saw him and you together so recently, at the banquet in Melrose, and heard you discuss your approaching golden wedding, and talked with him of his past experience and future plans, that his voice still lingers on my ear, and I think of him as one still laboring to bring in the "New Jerusalem," of which he and I talked when last we met. I doubt not he will continue to labor for that divine consummation in the world to which

he has been translated, and that God will find high and holy and congenial work to occupy his noble spirit, that sought to accomplish only good when with us. He has passed through the low gateway we call death, into another chamber of the King's, larger than this, and lovelier ; and the only sorrowful thing to him is that you are to wait awhile before your reunion.

My dear friend, do not sorrow too heavily over his sudden departure. Be glad that he passed through the portals of death without enduring long and painful sickness ; that he was spared mental decay, as well as physical torture, and "was not, because God took him." His transition was brief, and he passed from the arms of earthly love and wifely ministrations into those of the dear God.

I have thought of you continually since Mr. Coffin's death, with great sympathy and pity. May God comfort you and fill the handbreadth of life left you with resignation and trust and blessed anticipation of the coming reunion with your departed husband.

Yours truly,
MARY A. LIVERMORE.

20 BEACON ST., BOSTON,
March 2.

MY DEAR MRS. COFFIN :—

. . . I loved few men so well for their noble unselfish devotion to every good thing. God bless him ! God bless you ! It has been a full, rich, fruitful, overflowing life, — every talent put to service. The constant thought of it will be a sacrament to you, as the Everlasting Arms will be your support. . . .

Yours truly,
EDWIN D. MEAD.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.,
March 12, 1896.

MY DEAR MRS. COFFIN: —

I want to add my word of sympathy to the many which you are receiving. I have long known Mr. Coffin and respected his many fine qualities of mind and heart. He had the confidence of all who knew him and the warm regard of his friends. Every thought of him is pleasant. His work was large and useful and will abide. But I am sad when I think that I shall not again look into his kind face and hear his cheery voice. I am especially glad now that I was with you at the time of your golden wedding, and then had a little pleasant talk with him.

May all peace and comfort be given to you. Your friend,

ALEXANDER MCKENZIE.

16 CUMBERLAND ST., BOSTON, MASS.,
March 11, 1896.

MY DEAR MRS. COFFIN: —

How exceedingly wide was the circle of friends and admirers who were touched by the news of the departure of your husband! I recall the interest I always took in his war despatches. It was the event of each day to get his news in those troublous times. All New England hung on his words then, and since the war he has reached a far wider circle of friends in his books. Generations will come and go before his work will be forgotten. It was a great privilege to have known this good man personally. My wife and I shall ever prize the memory of that evening at your house, when you received the congratulations of multitudes of friends upon the

fiftieth anniversary of your marriage. Mrs. Pickard joins me in expressions of love and sympathy.

Very truly your friend,
S. T. PICKARD.

BOSTON, March 3, 1896.

DEAR MRS. COFFIN:—

. . . He was a staunch friend of mine, and I have long regarded him as one of the best men and most valuable and public-spirited citizens of Massachusetts; and as such he deserves to be, and will be, long and faithfully remembered.

With sincere sympathy,
A. E. PILLSBURY.

HEADQUARTERS
FRANCIS WASHBURN POST 92,
DEPT. MASS. G. A. R.

BRIGHTON DIST., March 18, 1896.

MRS. CHARLES CARLETON COFFIN,

Dear Madam:—At the regular meeting of Francis Washburn Post, held March 16, 1896, the Post by a rising vote instructed the Adjutant to present to you their heartfelt sympathy for the loss you have sustained,—a loss which not only this Post but every Post in the Grand Army of the Republic, as well as the whole country, has sustained in the death of that patriotic man, Charles Carleton Coffin; and may He “who doeth all things well” help and sustain you in this affliction is the wish of every member of Francis Washburn Post.

Yours with heartfelt sympathy,
J. FRANCIS CHICKEY,
Adjutant Post 92.

HOTEL SAVOY, NEW YORK,
March 7, 1896.

MY DEAR MRS. COFFIN :—

. . . I mourn the loss of an honored old friend, whose high qualities of mind and heart I always admired sincerely. May you find fortitude to bear this dreaded instant ending of the bliss of a perfect marriage that was granted to you for half a century.

It would gratify me if I were permitted to show my great regard for the departed friend by serving you in some way. This you will always find me ready to do.

Faithfully yours,

HENRY VILLARD.

302 WARREN AVE., CHICAGO,
March 3, 1896.

MRS. C. C. COFFIN,

Dear Friend :—A nobler man I never met, and for him I conceived the profoundest regard. Into a larger sphere he has entered, while here in this world his work will go on to the end of time.

With profound esteem,

I am very truly,

FLAVIUS J. BROBST.

20 BEACON ST., BOSTON.
March 4, 1896.

DEAR MRS. COFFIN :—

. . . Mr. Coffin was a rare character and such a personality as will live for centuries. God bless and comfort you!

Faithfully,

C. W. SANDERSON.

MASSACHUSETTS CLUB,
35 CONGRESS ST., BOSTON.

DEAR MRS. COFFIN : —

On behalf of the members of the Massachusetts Club, of which your honored husband was vice-president, I beg to offer you our most tender sympathy in this great affliction which has occurred. We loved him as a true and honored patriot, and one whom we enjoyed to hear in our circle. The shock of his sudden departure was the greater, as only a few days ago we grasped his and your hand in the hope that many years of usefulness would be added to the fifty which had already passed in your journey of married life of happiness. A representation will doubtless be at the Shawmut Church on Thursday to pay our last respect to our honored and beloved associate. God bless and keep you and your family, who are rich in the life and character bequeathed by such a husband and father !

Most sincerely, for the Club,

S. STILLMAN BLANCHARD,
Secretary.

“THE ADVANCE,”
1 BEACON ST., BOSTON.

March 8, 1896.

DEAR MRS. COFFIN : —

. . . At the burial services at Shawmut Church I longed to bear a brief testimony regarding him as I knew him in the army. Such a brave, tender-hearted, spiritually-minded Christian man as he showed himself to be in those days of fire and darkness ! He was a great man ; but, what was better, his goodness was still more marked.

May God comfort you !

ADDISON P. FOSTER.

WILLIAM H. LINCOLN SCHOOL,
BROOKLINE, MASS.

MY DEAR MRS. COFFIN : —

I have no words to express what is in my heart to say ; but I feel I must write and assure you of my love and sympathy. We are all deeply grieved, and every child feels a personal loss. They have asked to have the flag placed at half-mast on the schoolhouse on Thursday, and a laurel wreath hung upon his picture. While these outward signs cannot heal your broken heart, I do hope that the universal sorrow will make you feel grateful that his work has been appreciated. . . .

With much love,

RUTH E. LANDER.

15 RANGELEY, WINCHESTER, MASS.
March 9, 1896.

MY DEAR MRS. COFFIN : —

I feel that I must reach out to you, and take your hand with the tender grasp of sympathy, for I know so well what you are passing through. I have realized it all,—the sudden departure ; the awe and hush of death ; the attempted following of the departing soul in its flights upward ; the effort to catch a glimpse of the beyond through the opened gate ; and the vision of the newly glorified spirit, as it joins in the glad service of the redeemed. We fail in the conscious material reality of all this ; nevertheless, we do get spiritual glimpses of the unseen, so complete, so uplifting, that they help us to put aside our own sorrow in our gladness for the loved one gone. Did I not feel and know all this, I would not venture to intrude upon your sorrow ; but my heart seeks tenderly after you,

because I have suffered in like manner, and have been comforted. So I rejoice with you to-day, also, that our heavenly Father's love is so great, so free, that every afflicted soul may share in it. When such earnest, noble lives are stricken down, we mourn; but it is with deep gratitude to God for the lives He has spared so long to honor Him and shed their influence on the world. May you be buoyed up and held near to the Saviour's loving heart by the many prayers being offered for you. Shall we not hereafter look forward with greater joy to the coming of our Lord?

With true sympathy,

MRS. C. A. RICHARDSON.

LEXINGTON, MASS.
March 8, 1896.

MY DEAR MRS. COFFIN:—

. . . Mr. Coffin was a man of great value to the city of Boston, to the whole State, and to the country. . . . He has left a good Christian name and a noble record. These are a treasure to you. . . .

Most sincerely yours,

CYRUS HAMLIN.

March 13, 1896.

MY DEAR MRS. COFFIN:—

. . . As for your beloved and honored husband, you know, without my telling you, of my interest in him and my esteem for him in the old Malden days, and how I rejoiced in the sweetness of his home life. I rejoice that I can speak of him as an old friend. It is my settled conviction, many times expressed, that he did more to keep up the heart

and hopes of the New England States, during the terrible conflict of a generation ago, than any other one man. . . .

Yours affectionately,

A. C. ADAMS.

392 MARLBORO ST., BOSTON.
March 3, 1896.

DEAR MRS. COFFIN: —

Will you allow me to add my little tribute of love and esteem to those of the great multitude who will hasten to express their high regard for one who has filled so large and honorable a place in the city of his adoption and in the country at large?

I desire, therefore, to say that your dear husband was to me the embodiment of everything to be looked for in a true Christian gentleman.

Your friend,

WM. G. BENEDICT.

WEST WINSTED, CONN.,
March 3, 1896.

MY DEAR MRS. COFFIN: —

. . . No one could meet Mr. Coffin without being impressed by his genuineness, his large heart, and broad sympathies. Every one who knew him loved him. . . . What a legacy he left the boys of our land in his books! We have, and shall ever have, better men for them. . . .

With loving sympathy,

Yours,

SARAH BOYD CAMP.

WASHINGTON, D. C.,
March 17, 1896.

. . . I knew Mr. Coffin very well,
and considered him one of the very best of
men. . . .

CARROLL D. WRIGHT.

PROVIDENCE, R. I.
March 3, 1896.

DEAR MRS. COFFIN:—

Some sorrows are so full of satisfaction and rest that we actually stand fixed and strong on solid rock, the conscious grief balanced by the divineness of every memory and environment. . . . He was a man who lived thoroughly the noblest Puritan principles; and when the completeness was reached and the years mellow, nothing remained but to have the gathering of his golden friends,—a day satisfying and beautiful,—and then the finger of God to write, “It is finished.”

I have never known one’s departure and burial service in more perfect keeping with the life that had been lived.

It may seem strange to you, but I am glad Mr. Coffin could pass so easily and beautifully away,—that now all the outreaches of eternity are his. And I am glad for the abounding comfort it must bring to you, that you have been the joy and help and actual developer of such a true man. It seems as if upon you both fell the mantle of unity; and your home has been a centre and attraction of all that is right. You have no shadows; a benediction is upon the rest of your days,—and then the going-out into the unseen, which can never be anything but delights!

I do not send this as a condolence, but be-

cause it seems right that all who have known
the beauty and honor of your blended days
should breathe upon you who remain a
“Peace be unto you! Amen.”

AUGUSTINE CALDWELL.

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